

OPENING STATEMENT

SENATOR BILL FRIST

HEARING: COMMERCIALIZATION OF SPACE

MARCH 5, 1998; 2:00 P.M.; RM. SR-253

GOOD AFTERNOON.

WELCOME TO OUR HEARING ON THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF SPACE.

THE TOPIC WE WILL ADDRESS TODAY IS VITAL TO OUR NATION.

AS A NEW INDUSTRY, COMMERCIAL SPACE ACCOUNTED FOR \$7.5 BILLION WORLDWIDE IN 1995, ACCORDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE. BY ONE ESTIMATE, SPACE COULD BE A \$120 BILLION WORLDWIDE BUSINESS BY THE YEAR 2000. THIS TYPE OF GROWTH WILL MEAN SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN HOW THINGS ARE CURRENTLY DONE. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THESE TECHNOLOGIES WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL AMERICANS.

COMMERCIAL SPACE TOUCHES UPON BROADER ISSUES,

WHICH WE MUST ALSO CONSIDER. THIS INDUSTRY EMPLOYS HIGHLY SKILLED, WELL-PAID WORKERS. IT THEREFORE REQUIRES A WELL-EDUCATED WORKFORCE, WHICH IN TURN ENERGIZES BOTH OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN IT. IT IS ALSO A GROWTH INDUSTRY WHICH WILL EMPLOY MORE PEOPLE AND CREATE MORE JOBS OVER THE NEXT DECADE. THEREFORE, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO SEE THESE INDUSTRIES MOVE OVERSEAS OR BE UNABLE TO COMPETE IN THE WORLDWIDE MARKET BECAUSE WE DID NOT FULFILL OUR RESPONSIBILITY HERE IN THE CONGRESS.

AMERICA MUST BE PREPARED TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE AND IN SOME AREAS, SUCH AS REMOTE SENSING FROM SPACE, MUST REMAIN THE WORLD'S LEADER. THIS REQUIRES VIGILANCE OVER OUR LEGAL AND REGULATORY STRUCTURE. WE MUST MAKE CHANGES TO EXISTING LAWS WHERE CHANGE IS WARRANTED AND IS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST.

SUCH LAWS AS THE COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH ACT OF 1984, AND ITS AMENDMENTS OF 1988, AS WELL AS THE LAND REMOTE SENSING POLICY ACT OF 1992, NEED TO BE REVIEWED PERIODICALLY TO ENSURE THAT THEIR LEGAL FRAMEWORK IS UP-TO-DATE.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS HEARING IS TO EXAMINE THE

CHANGES TO THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK THAT ARE NECESSARY TO ENABLE THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THESE PROMISING INDUSTRIES. IT IS ALSO TO CONSIDER THE BROAD POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR NATION, AND THE WORLD, OF THE FUTURE COMMERCIALIZATION OF SPACE.

TODAY WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE SENATOR WAYNE ALLARD OF COLORADO AND SENATOR BOB GRAHAM OF FLORIDA WITH US TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN EXISTING LEGISLATION AFFECTING BOTH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PRIVATE COMPANIES.

FOLLOWING THEIR TESTIMONY, WE WILL CONVENE A SECOND PANEL CONSISTING OF GOVERNMENT WITNESSES, FOLLOWED BY A THIRD PANEL CONSISTING OF WITNESSES FROM THE COMMERCIAL SPACE INDUSTRY.